

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

April 22, 1999

Projects Reviewed

Convened: 8:00am

Civic Center Master Plan

Neighborhood Plans: Greenwood/Phinney Ridge, Queen

Anne/Seattle Center, Admiral, Denny Regrade

Neighborhood Plans: Commercial Core, DUCPG, Denny

Triangle, Pioneer Square, International District,

South Lake Union

Adjourned: 12:00pm

Commissioners Present

Rick Sundberg, chair

Moe Batra

Gail Dubrow

Jeff Girvin

Gerald Hansmire

Jon Layzer

Peter Miller

Staff Present

John Rahaim

Peter Aylsworth

Vanessa Murdock

Rebecca Walls

042299.1 Project: **Civic Center Master Plan**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Dennis Haskell, Hewitt Architects
 Norma Miller, Executive Services Department
 Attendees: Marty Curry, Seattle Planning Commission
 Patrick Doherty, Design, Construction & Land Use
 John Eskelin, Department of Neighborhoods
 Susanne Friedman, Seattle Planning Commission
 Cheryl Sizov, Seattle Design Commission
 Mel Streeter, Seattle Planning Commission
 Joe Taskey, Seattle Transportation
 Tom Wales, Seattle Planning Commission
 Time: 1 hr. (SDC Ref. # DC00020)

The Draft Civic Center Master Plan is currently being revised and updating in preparation for City Council review in May. The preferred conceptual alternative has been developed along with design guidelines and programmatic elements.

The Design Guidelines for the project address issues regarding open space, building character, linkages, parking, and sustainability. Since the last Commission review the following additional elements have been addressed in the Master Plan:

Key Tower

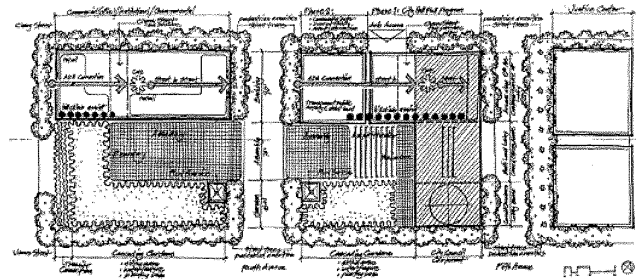
A sustainability section in the Design Guidelines

Implementation strategies; phasing, time schedules, and budget ranges

Analysis of policies and trends that might impact the Master Plan

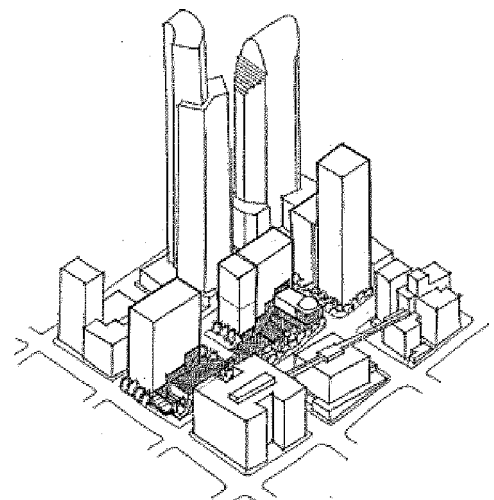
Detailed meeting schedule

Secondary plans; analysis of transportation issues, operations and maintenance



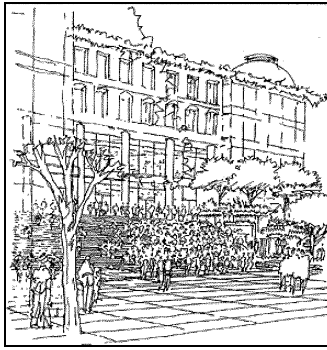
Master Plan concept

The Master Plan recommends phased development of the Municipal Building site, new construction on the Public Safety Building site, and reuse of Key Tower and the Artic Building. The Alaska and Dexter Horton Buildings will be sold. The first phase of new construction will occur on the east half of the Municipal Building site and will include the full City Hall program. Once completed, the second phase will be constructed on the west half block of the Municipal Building site and the Public Safety Building site. The open space is concentrated on the south half of both sites and will include a large, plaza, amphitheater steps, terraced gardens and a promontory at the west end.

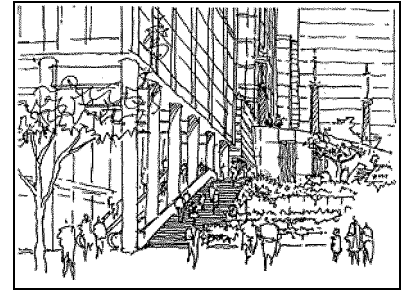


Concept axonometric

The inclusion of Key Tower creates new pedestrian access and entry challenges to resolve. The Master Plan recommends that the three-lane configuration of Fifth Avenue in the retail core be extended south with the conversion of the east turn lane into a wider sidewalk. New escalators are proposed as one way of providing adequate public access to the main entry from the Fifth and Cherry intersection.



Sketch of amphitheater



Sketch of promontory

Discussion:

- Dubrow:** In previous reviews we discussed the concept of civic spaces that encourage citizen participation in government. Often citizens are referred to as customers rather than as citizens actively participating in civic government. How is this concept of active citizen participation in government described in the Master Plan?
- Haskell:** The concept of public involvement is dealt with architecturally by locating Council Chambers at the ground floor level near the main entrance. We are trying to locate programmatic elements that encourage citizen involvement at the main level. Phase Two of the project will function as a sort of Downtown community center with public information, and spaces for various public agencies. The idea that primary public spaces are located on the first floor is based on the concept of citizen participation.
- N. Miller:** We have attempted to conceptualize civic participation in government functions visually. However, the concept has not yet been developed in the Master Plan document verbally. We envision that the program will include public meeting spaces, public restrooms, preparation rooms, and other social services.
- Dubrow:** What types of public spaces will be on the first floor besides Council Chambers?
- N. Miller:** We plan to have a conference center with conference spaces in Phase Two of the project and in Key Tower. The conference center will provide meeting locations for Boards and Commissions as well as preparation rooms for presenters.
- Streeter:** There will be a tremendous number of people walking from Key Tower to the Civic Center. How will people circulate up and down the steep hills?
- Haskell:** There will be a variety of ways to get from Third Avenue to Fifth Avenue. These include circulation through the buildings with escalator and elevator access, along the south edge of the buildings via an escalator and stairs, through the garden terraces, or along Cherry and James Streets.
- Batra:** How will the elimination of the east traffic lane on Fifth Avenue effect traffic congestion? Has Seattle Transportation seen the proposal?
- Haskell:** According to traffic analyses, the increase in traffic congestion will be minimal. Fifth Avenue has three lanes throughout the retail district. This proposal would extend the three lane configuration to the south. Seattle Transportation has not been yet contacted regarding the lane configuration.
- Hansmire:** The evening traffic congestion is not based on volume, but on drivers making a left turn on Cherry and merging to go south on Sixth Avenue.
- Dubrow:** The street reconfiguration seems to be supported by the principle of providing adequate and sensible pedestrian access to Key tower. Does the Master Plan

include an Arts Plan? When will an artist be involved to identify opportunities for art that is either integrated in the architecture or independent.

N. Miller: We are meeting with Barbara Goldstein of the Arts Commission next week. We plan to involve an artist as soon as possible, but don't want to get ahead of Council approval.

Action: **The Commission appreciates the comprehensive briefing. Recognizing the stage in the master planning process of the project, the Commission recommends further exploration in future design phases of reducing Fifth Avenue to three lanes and providing ample and visible space for active citizen participation in government.**

042299.2 Project: **Neighborhood Plans: Greenwood/Phinney Ridge, Queen Anne/Seattle Center, Admiral, Denny Regrade**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: David Goldberg, Strategic Planning Office
 Martin Spiegel, Greenwood/Phinney Ridge Planning Committee
 Attendees: Joe Taskey, Seattle Transportation
 Ann Sutphin, Strategic Planning Office
 Time: 1 hr. (SDC Ref. # DC00039)

The following outlines contain the key strategies for each of the four Neighborhood Plans. The plans are not yet complete and have not yet been recognized by City Council.

Greenwood/Phinney Ridge Neighborhood Plan

Create a vital Greenwood/Phinney Neighborhood that supports an economically viable mainstreet along Greenwood Avenue North and a redeveloped town center

- streetscape improvements
- facade preservation
- Commercial Center Master Plan

Connect the civic spaces and the commercial center with a vibrant Greenwood/Phinney Avenue

- New Library facility

“Put the green back in Greenwood”...and Phinney Ridge

- Greenhouse Park
- Green Street connections
- Community Center

Improve regional mobility and accessibility within the community

- Improvements to 85th Street

The following web page contains information regarding the Greenwood Neighborhood Plan:
<http://www.winwins.com/greenwood>

Discussion:

- Dubrow:** Has the community discussed the addition of a pedestrian connection between the commercial center and Greenwood Avenue?
- Spiegel:** Yes they have discussed that possibility.
- Hansmire:** Due to the lack of a connection the small merchants on Greenwood Avenue don't currently get pedestrian volumes from commercial center shoppers.
- Hough:** We would like to provide pedestrian links that reinforce the commercial core. There are pedestrian links parallel to 85th Street.
- Dubrow:** It sounds like the neighborhood intends to preserve the commercial storefronts, but there may need to be a set of guidelines for preserving the character of the commercial core as a whole. Incremental development could erode the overall character of the commercial strip.
- Spiegel:** I think the neighborhood needs to do an inventory of the significant elements to be saved which will lead to the development of a set of guidelines.
- Hough:** The neighborhood has a draft set of design guidelines for Design Review implementation that define character elements and reinforce Greenwood Avenue as a key pedestrian corridor.
- Hansmire:** Greenwood Avenue has a very nice collection of historic Seattle storefronts.
- Goldberg:** One of the policy issues will be defining the urban village around a linear core, like Greenwood Avenue, which doesn't coincide with the centralized urban

village concept. It is also important to protect the historic patterns of development around modes of transportation, such as the trolley line on Greenwood Avenue.

Hough: The area currently has a lot of new development projects underway and there is increasing pressure to redevelop commercial properties.

Dubrow: Once the inventory is complete and the plan has been further developed, the neighborhood may want to involve urban planning students from the University of Washington in developing implementation strategies.

Layzer: This project is an example of the Neighborhood Design Review process being taken further with detailed, neighborhood specific guidelines. The neighborhood planning groups should continue to coordinate with the Design Review program.

Queen Anne Neighborhood Plan

Uptown Park

- key landscaped streets
- single purpose residential

Uptown Center

- neighborhood center for meeting space and activities
- neighborhood park
- Roy Street Conservation District

Counterbalance

- frequent headways up and down Queen Anne Avenue to connect hill with Uptown

Bicycle Beltway

- commuter route at base of Queen Anne connecting to growing employment areas along 15th and Westlake

Elliott Bay Access

- pedestrian and bicycle connections to Myrtle Edwards and Elliott Bay

Crown of Queen Anne

- improvements to the historic boulevard

Good Neighbor Seattle Center

- increased parking enforcement
- increased neighborhood/Seattle Center coordination

The following web page contains information regarding the Queen Anne Neighborhood Plan:

<http://www.scn.org/neighbors/qaplan/overview.html>

Discussion:

Dubrow: This neighborhood has a vibrant commercial core. Is there an opportunity to generate private funds for improvements?

Goldberg: It is my understanding that Queen Anne merchants, as a group, weren't interested in funding improvements.

Layzer: Since Queen Anne is designated an Urban Village we should anticipate a need for more community facilities. There may be opportunities to coordinate community facilities with new and renovated community library projects.

Goldberg: Many of the neighborhood planning groups have discussed alternative, "out of the box" solutions for community center needs.

Layzer: The combination of libraries and community centers increases the importance of Design Commission involvement in neighborhood library projects.

Sundberg: Many of the new King County libraries have separate components for community functions that can be operated independently.

- Dubrow:** If community facilities are consistently a part of neighborhood library projects, then the Department of Neighborhoods should meet with Library staff regarding system-wide coordination. The necessary functional and programmatic requirements will probably vary in different neighborhoods.
- Layzer:** We were involved in an extensive series of workshops and discussions regarding a trail along Westlake Avenue. The ultimate conclusion was that commuter bicycle traffic should remain on Dexter Avenue, leaving a Westlake Avenue trail for pedestrians and slow bicycles. Is this consistent with the neighborhood plan?
- Goldberg:** There is ongoing community discussion regarding the trail at Westlake Avenue. As the South Lake Union Area continues to grow and employment increases, Dexter Avenue won't be adequate for commuter bicycle connections to that area. Seattle Transportation will continue to look at this issue in the future.
- Layzer:** Given its role as a major freight corridor and the adjacent marine uses, it is difficult to utilize as a multi-modal corridor.

Belltown Neighborhood Plan

Green Streets and open space connections

- existing green streets include Blanchard, Bell, Vine, Cedar, and Clay. Eagle and Bay Streets are proposed
- improvements to Unical site
- develop new City acquired parcels adjacent to P-Patch
- retain at-grade crossings and enhance connections to waterfront
- opposition to Broad Street overpass

Strategy to sustain Belltown's character

- urban design guidelines
- designation of a conservation district
- land banking/block breaking
- Community Center facility/school

Strategy to sustain adequate parking

- shared parking
- primary use parking restrictions
- short term parking management

Admiral Neighborhood Plan

- improve the existing character and enhance the community's identity, the identity of the Admiral Residential Urban Village and the surrounding neighborhood
- alleviate traffic and parking problems
- project existing open space and create additional protected open space
- improve existing city services

Discussion:

- Dubrow:** The Design Commission, Design Review Boards, and Landmarks Board can work with the neighborhood on accommodating growth. Construction of a publicly funded parking structure is a difficult issue.
- Layzer:** The public/private partnership issues are challenging. The goal is to make neighborhood cores more pedestrian oriented. If a parking structure is pursued it should have significant trade-off commitments for pedestrian improvements in the surrounding neighborhood core that enhance pedestrian and bicycle use. It may require a mechanism for replacing street parking with pedestrian amenities.

Dubrow: The city should commit to the principle of funding civic spaces before parking garages.

Action: The Commission appreciates the comprehensive briefing.

042299.3 Project: **Neighborhood Plans: Commercial Core, Downtown Urban Center Planning Group (DUCPG), Denny Triangle, Pioneer Square, International District, South Lake Union**

Phase: Briefing

Presenters: Jerry Ernst, NBBJ
John Eskelin, Department of Neighborhoods
Roger Wagoner, Berryman & Henigar

Attendees: Barbara Gray, Strategic Planning Office
Mike Podowski, Design, Construction & Land Use
Cheryl Sizov, Seattle Design Commission
Ann Sutphin, Strategic Planning Office
Joe Taskey, Seattle Transportation

Time: 1 hr. (SDC Ref. # DC00039)

The Draft Downtown Plan prepared by the Downtown Urban Center Planning Group (DUCPG) contains recommendations for land use, transportation, housing, and human services improvements for downtown. These recommendations are related to and consistent with the recommendations of the five downtown urban village neighborhoods. The DUCPG also recommends the development of an urban design framework plan that will coordinate ongoing efforts with the vision and principles of the downtown community. The Draft Downtown Plan has been reorganized into the following Policy Areas:

1. Neighborhood Policies (International District (ID), Pioneer Square, Commercial Core, Belltown, Denny Triangle)
2. Land Use and Design Policies
3. Open Space Policies (including Green Streets)
4. Economic Development Policies
5. Housing and Human Services Policies

The following outline contains the key strategies, projects, and activities of the four downtown neighborhoods as well as the South Lake Union Neighborhood.

International District

Top seven projects: catalyze housing development; develop North Kingdome parking lot as housing; improve public safety, cleanliness and behavior standards; strengthen economic base; build pedestrian linkages; improve access during events and secure community parking facility; develop existing parking lots on the East side of Occidental Park.

Pioneer Square

Key strategies: The planning group focused primarily on implementation of stadium development funding

- culture and economy
- housing
- improve public spaces and public safety
- accessibility and parking
- implementation

Commercial Core

Key strategies:

The planning group focused on overall downtown issues

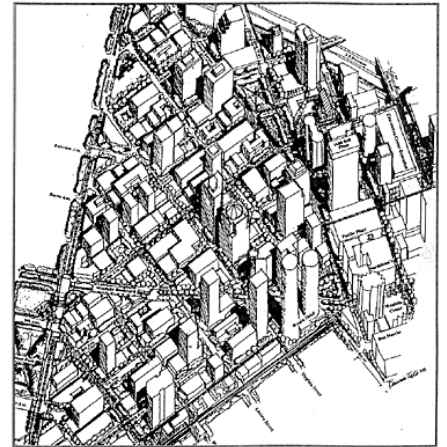
- modify zoning and design standards to stimulate desirable development and promote architectural variety
- rework Bonus and TDR Programs to stimulate desirable development and promote architectural variety
- create development incentives to stimulate housing production
- develop green streets and open space to enhance urban design character and to support population growth
- create a master plan to guide the design and maintenance of public spaces in the downtown (Urban Design Plan)

Denny Triangle

Key strategies:

The planning group recognizes a significant opportunity to develop a strong neighborhood identity

- amend zoning and Bonus Program to stimulate housing development
- neighborhood improvements to create residential enclaves along designated green streets
- transportation and circulation improvements
- develop air rights at Convention Place Station



South Lake Union

Key activity areas:

Neighborhood Character

- develop design guidelines
- preserve existing land uses and industrial character

Parks and Open Space

- provide open space in conjunction with Maritime Heritage
- define uses for existing buildings in South Lake Union Park
- provide transient and historic ship moorage
- design bulkheads, piers, and shoreline for maximum public use
- incorporate natural features and Native American Long House
- emphasize pedestrian and transit access including pedestrian overpass on Valley Street
- provide limited parking north of Valley Street; primary parking in structure south of Valley Street

Transportation

- develop system wide improvements in the Mercer/Valley corridor, including support for South Lake Union Master Plan
- develop related pedestrian and traffic improvements
- conduct parking study and develop parking plan for South Lake Union

Additional information regarding these and other neighborhood plans can be found on the world wide web. The following web page is for the Pioneer Square Neighborhood Plan:

<http://www.pioneersquare.org/plan/page01/>

Discussion:

- Hansmire:** It has been projected that by the year 2014 the downtown area will experience a 40% job growth and a 25% growth in housing. With this rapid increase of approximately 40,000 new downtown residents, it is crucial that Seattle develop into a truly livable city. How can we make a public realm that will support the number of new residents? The city needs an urban design plan with descriptive implementation strategies for making it happen.
- Ernst:** I have concerns regarding dividing the downtown area into fragments. Human interaction is what makes a city work. The neighborhood plans have reinforced each neighborhood's distinctive character, but it is crucial to consider the downtown as a whole, not as separate pieces. We need a plan for the entire downtown that allows for distinctive neighborhoods while providing coherent commonalities that stitch the city together. The Design Commission is in a unique position to address these issues.
- Sundberg:** I agree, and have concerns regarding continued incremental planning and development. We need a holistic piece that ties the downtown neighborhoods together.
- Rahaim:** I see the individual neighborhood planning process as the first phase of a longer process that will lead to a real urban design plan for downtown. Funding could be raised from a variety of public and private sources. The Seattle Design Center is a good entity to handle the process.
- Ernst:** One key principle for the success of an urban design planning effort is a wide diversity of financial support and public involvement.
- Layzer:** We often respond to issues on a project by project basis. When reviewing individual downtown projects it is important to consider the whole downtown area.
- Eskelin:** The effects of Sound Transit taking over the tunnel is another major issue for the downtown plan. The greatest challenge will be in moving ahead with individual projects while the plan is being developed.
- Rahaim:** The sooner an urban design plan is started, the better.
- Layzer:** The Light Rail Review Panel is currently discussing the issues around removing buses from the tunnel. If Third Avenue becomes a transit mall, then the streetscape must be able to support it. I encourage other Commission members to attend the LRRP discussion regarding this issue.
- Hansmire:** It is also important that the urban design plan include tools and mechanisms for continued development. The entire image of the city will be based on this plan. Seattle could be the primary west coast city in the future.
- Sundberg:** The Design Commission has supported the urban design plan idea from the start.
- Wagoner:** Neighborhood members have also been very vocal in carrying the message to City Council.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the comprehensive briefing.**

042299.5 Project: **Commission Business**

Action Items:

- A. MINUTES OF THE APRIL 1ST MEETING: Approved as amended.

Discussion Items:

- B. LIGHT RAIL REVIEW PANEL UPDATE: At its last meeting, the LRRP was briefed on art concepts for the aerial guideways and the design guidelines for the wayfinding and signage elements.
- C. MEADOWBROOK POND CONSULTANT SELECTION: Nine design consultants responded to the RFP and three were selected for interviews.
- D. SDC RETREAT: The Design Commission Retreat is scheduled for the mornings of May 20th and June 3rd. The Commission conduct standard project review in the afternoons of both days.
- E. CIP PROJECT MANAGER TRAINING, MAY: The Seattle Arts, Planning, and Design Commissions along with the Landmarks Board will be conducting a joint CIP project manager training session to update city staff on the roles and responsibilities of the four review bodies.
- F. SAND POINT DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE & MASTER PLAN UPDATE: The Master Plan will be presented to the Commission for review on May 6th.
- G. SOUTH LAKE UNION: The city has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the South Lake Union Master Plan. The Plan will focus primarily on city-owned properties in the South Lake Union Neighborhood. Commissioner Girvin will serve on the consultant selection panel.
- H. ARCHITECT POSITION OPENING—INTERVIEWS: Two applicants for the architect position have been selected for interviews.
- I. COMMISSIONER COMMITMENTS: The following is a list of Commissioner subcommittee involvement and Design Commission related commitments:
- SUNDBERG: Municipal Campus Master Plan, Seattle Central Library consultant selection committee, Light Rail Review Panel, SDC Architect position selection, City Council visitation,
 - BATRA: Sand Point Advisory Committee, Design Review
 - DUBROW: WSCTC, Intern utilities project review
 - GIRVIN: South Lake Union Master Plan consultant selection
 - LAYZER: Light Rail Review Panel
 - MILLER: Municipal Center consultant selection committee
- J. CITY COUNCIL BECD COMMITTEE BRIEFINGS: The Design Commission Executive Director will brief the BECD Committee on Design Commission tasks and related issues three to four times each year.
- K. DESIGN REVIEW VIDEO: The Design Review videos are available at the Design Commission office in the Dexter Horton Building, Suite 200.